

Nutritional Knowledge and Nutritional Practices of DIII Collegiate Dancers

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Introduction

- Professional ballet dancers on average weigh 10 to 20% below ideal weight¹
- The NCAA does not monitor collegiate dance teams, so body weight and nutritional practices of collegiate dancers is relatively unknown

Purpose

- Determine collegiate dancers' risk for developing an eating disorder and assess nutritional misconceptions of dancers

Methods

- Approval from IRB was obtained and participants completed an informed consent
- 25 DIII female dance team members completed an electronic survey that was distributed via email and included questions from the EAT-26 (eating disorder risk), questions to assess nutritional knowledge, and the ASA-24 electronic 24-hour dietary recall
- Bivariate correlation tests and unpaired t-tests were conducted with SPSS

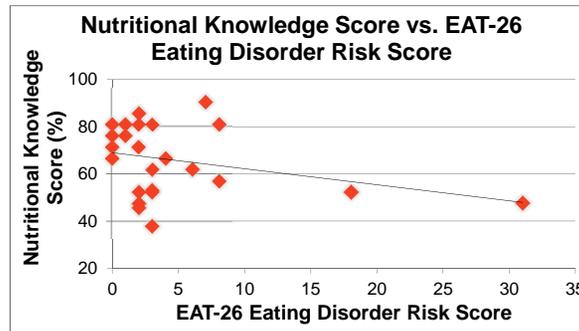


Figure 1. EAT-26 Eating Disorder risk based on nutritional knowledge score ($r = -0.307$, $p = 0.068$, $n = 25$).

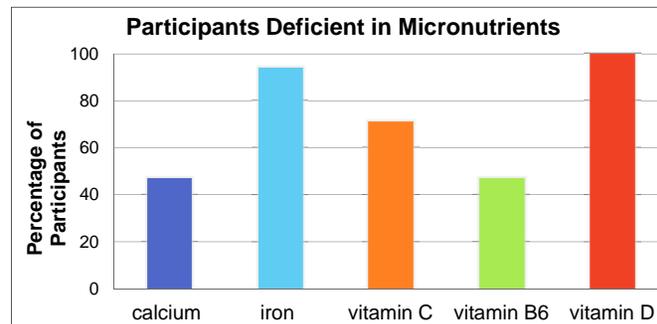


Figure 2. Percentage of participants deficient in micronutrients important for athletic performance.

Table 1. RDA recommendations, recommendations for dancers and dietary intakes. Recommendations based on 19-24 year old 120lb, female.

	RDA	Recommendations for Dancers	Dietary Intake
kcal	2000	---	1750 +/- 630
Protein (g)	46	65.3- 92.5	61.5 +/- 26
Carbohydrates (g)	130	163-227	217 +/- 71
Fat (%)	20-35	20-35	32 +/- 9

Results

- BMI averaged 21.7 +/- 3.1 ($n = 24$)
- EAT-26 scores averaged 4.56 +/- 6.7 indicating a low risk for an eating disorder ($n = 25$)
- One dancer indicated a high risk with an EAT-26 score of 31
- Participants ($n = 25$) scored, on average, 66% on the nutritional knowledge questionnaire
- Those who had taken a nutrition course scored significantly higher, 76% ($t = 2.37$, $p = 0.0266$, $df = 23$)

Conclusion

- Diets seemed to meet most RDA recommendations on average, but intakes varied extremely
- 41% failed to meet at least 50% of the RDA for more than one nutrient
- Improving nutritional knowledge in DIII collegiate dancers could decrease eating disorder risk

Literature Cited

¹Doyle-Lucas, A. F., & Davy, B. M. (2011). Development and evaluation of an education intervention program for pre-professional adolescent ballet dancers: Nutrition for optimal performance. *Journal of Dance Medicine & Science*, 15(2), 65-75.

Acknowledgments

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